

FIRST AID AT WORK

The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 and the supplementary approved code of practice and guidance require employers to make suitable arrangements for the welfare of their employees should they sustain injury or become ill whilst at work.

To this end, the Isle of Wight Council will provide information, training, adequate first aid cover, first aid equipment and facilities at each place of work. Managers are required to incorporate into workplace health and safety statements details of the arrangements for first aid for their staff. Although non-employees such as school pupils and residents in homes are not covered by the Regulations, the Isle of Wight Council do have a duty to provide first aid cover for them.

FIRST AID PERSONNEL

First-aid personnel are employees who have volunteered for the role and who have been assessed by the workplace manager as being suitable. Where there are insufficient numbers of volunteers, the workplace manager will nominate person(s) to undertake first aid duties. It is essential that persons selected have the aptitude and ability to cope with the training and are free of health conditions which might affect their capability in an emergency.

In multiple occupancy buildings such as County Hall, joint arrangements should be made through a co-ordinator to establish coverage for the building.

It is for each manager or co-ordinator to establish the first aid needs for their workplace. This will require an assessment of the risks involved, as well as considering the geographical position of the workplace, the number of employees and potential hazards to which employees might be exposed. As a guide the minimum level of first aid cover for low-medium risk establishments is **one appointed person to every 50 employees**. However, consideration should also be given to temporary absence of first aiders such as annual leave, sickness etc and also to shift work. It is therefore recommended that this be **increased to two persons**. In larger establishments where the number of employees exceeds 50 or where work activities are of a high risk, the approved code of practice recommends that first aiders are qualified in the industrial first aid at work certificate.

FIRST AIDERS: Are qualified personnel who have received training and passed an examination in accordance with national standards. They are required to undergo refresher training every three years in order to ensure that their skills are maintained. (Since this is a set syllabus based on industrial first aid it might not be suitable for all workplaces).

APPOINTED PERSONS: Must receive training to enable them to provide basic life savings skills. This short course is supplemented with additional time so as to cover the specialist risk associated with workplace activities. Courses vary from 1 to 2 days duration (Certificate in First Aid Practice). Training should be repeated every three years.

EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

It is unlikely that first-aid personnel rendering assistance will become the subject of legal action. Providing they have acted in accordance with the training they were given, they could not be seen as being negligent. However, the Isle of Wight Council through its insurance policies indemnifies members of staff against such claims.

HEALTH AND SAFETY MANUAL (February 2011) Section 2.15

FIRST AID EQUIPMENT

First aid boxes and travelling kits should contain a sufficient quantity of suitable first-aid materials and **nothing else**. The first aid box should be of a suitable material which will protect the contents from damp and dust.

Managers must ensure that workplace arrangements include delegation of responsibility for restocking first aid supplies. It is suggested that a contents list be fixed to the inside of every first aid box to aid such checks. In choosing the location for first aid boxes they should be sited in areas which present special risk, at a central location and/or in first aid rooms.

Access to a telephone must be provided at all times, and arrangements made for out-of-hours workers and other users of premises.

When hiring out premises arrangements should be made with the hirer as to who will provide first aid equipment and cover. Any arrangements should be in writing to ensure that both parties are clear as to responsibility. The same applies to contractors such as cleaners who regularly work in council premises. The contractor is responsible for providing facilities and equipment unless agreed otherwise in writing with the client.

SUPPLEMENTARY EQUIPMENT

The following items do not form part of the statutory first equipment but may be used by trained first aiders and stored nearby.

- # Blankets - which should be protected from damp and dust
- # Disposable protection - Plastic gloves and aprons
- # Disposal bags - suitable for soiled dressings etc
- # Resuscitades
- # Blunt ended scissors - where clothing might have to be cut away.

FIRST AID ROOMS

When it is not possible to dedicate a specific area for the administering of first aid, consideration must be given to providing a suitable "quiet" area. Where a dedicated first aid room is provided the following advice is extracted from the approved code of practice.

- # A first aider should be responsible for the room and its contents.
- # The location of the room is near to an outer door and the entrance wide enough to accommodate wheelchair/stretchers.
- # The room is available at all times and not used for any other purpose other than first aid and health screening.
- # The room should contain suitable facilities, be effectively ventilated, heated, illuminated and cleaned each day.

FIRST AID NOTICES

All safety signs must comply with the Safety Signs Regulations 1996.

- # First aid boxes require marking with a white cross on a green background.
- # Notices stating the names of first aiders and indicating where they can be contacted should be prominently displayed.
- # First aid rooms should be clearly identified together with details of first aiders.

HEALTH AND SAFETY MANUAL (February 2011) Section 2.15

RECORD KEEPING

Records of all cases treated should be made.

First aiders must be made aware of the system for reporting and recording accidents and be clear on responsibilities for completing and signing the relevant forms.

Workplace managers are required to maintain an up-to-date list of trained first aiders and ensure that refresher training is provided before the expiry date of certificates.

FIRST AID TREATMENT

First aiders should not attempt to provide any treatment which has not formed part of their training. First aid is taught to meet the standard set out by the Health and Safety Executive and is in line with the voluntary aids society first aid manual.

In certain cases special arrangements for school pupils and persons with disabilities might need to be made in relation to their treatment.

CONTENTS OF FIRST AID BOXES AND KITS

Items required under the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981.

First aid boxes and travelling kits should contain a sufficient quantity of suitable first aid material AND NOTHING ELSE. The minimum requirement being:

Item	First Aid Boxes	Travelling First Aid Kits
Guidance Card	1	1
Individually wrapped sterile adhesive dressing in assorted sizes (Detectable for catering industry)	20	6
Sterile eye pads, with attachment	2	-
Individually wrapped triangular bandages	6	2
Safety Pins	6	2
Medium sized individually wrapped sterile unmedicated wound dressings (approx 10 cm x 8 cm)	6	-
Large sterile individually wrapped unmedicated wound dressings (approx 13 cm x 9 cm)	2	1
Extra large sterile individually wrapped unmedicated wound dressings (approx 28 cm x 17.5 cm)	3	-
Individually wrapped moist cleaning wipes* (where soap and water is not readily available)	*	*

Where tap water is not readily available for eye irrigation, sterile water or sterile normal saline in sealed disposable containers should be provided. Each container should hold at least 300ml (900ml minimum stock held).